



## LIBRARY OF HEAVEN'S PATH

### C1124: Too Long, Too Long



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A huge crowd of combat masters were standing right outside the library. Shi Hao and Xiao Bo from before were among them as well.

"What are you all up to?" The huge crowd gathered had eyes that were either reddened from agitation or anger. However, regardless of what it was, it was clear that they were up to something. Thus, Division Head Wei frowned in displeasure and said, "Sun shi isn't from the Combat Master Hall, so he need not obey our rules to enter the library."

"Division Head Wei, we aren't here for the matter!" Noting that Division Head Wei had misunderstood their intentions, Shi Hao quickly spoke up and explained, "There's a matter that we hope for you look into!"

The happenings in the Trial of Inner Breath were simply too shocking that they feared that the other party would not believe them if they were to just speak of it. It was better to bring the other party over to have a look for himself.

Noticing the grim looks on their faces, Division Head Wei asked, "What happened?"

"Division Head Wei, this way please. You will understand once you see it!" Huang Bo said as he politely gestured the way forward.

"Alright then." Seeing that they were not willing to speak of it, Division Head Wei thought that it might be a matter that was confidential to the Inner Breath Division. Thus, he turned to Zhang Xuan and said, "Pardon me, but I will have to trouble Sun shi to wait here for a moment."

"Don't worry, it's no problem at all." Zhang Xuan nodded.

It was apparent that the other party had some private matters to attend to, so it was not convenient for him to tag along.

With an apologetic look, Division Head Wei quickly followed Xiao Bo out.

After he left, Zhang Xuan shook his head. Just as he was about to close his eyes and make use of this opportunity to look through the books that he had just collected, the combat master named Shi Hao suddenly walked up to him. "My name is Shi Hao, and I wish to have a spar with Sun shi."

Considering how the other party had smashed through all ten of the stone walls in the Inner Breath Division, the sheer amount of zhenqi the other party possessed was bound to be countless times greater than his. He had never met a peer who exceeded him by so much before, and this had truly piqued his curiosity and fighting will.

At the same time, he also wanted to see if the other party had truly used his own strength to achieve such an astounding score in the Trial of Inner Breath.

"You want to have a spar with me?"

"That's right!" Shi Hao clasped his fist. "I hope that Sun shi can agree to my request!"

Noting the earnest look in the other party's eyes, Zhang Xuan relented. "Alright then!"

All along, other than Feng Xun, he had never crossed blows with any combat masters before. This would be a good opportunity for him to assess their strength too.

"Pardon me!"

Taking a deep breath, Shi Hao's chest puffed up. At the same time, his aura surged immensely, and as if a dagger drawn from his sheath, a chilling air burst into the surroundings.



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Hu la!

He sprinted forward swiftly with powerful footsteps. Even before he reached Zhang Xuan, he had already whipped up a strong gale in the surroundings, leaving one feeling as if a behemoth was standing before them.

Sheer power could crush all techniques.

The amount of zhenqi that ran through Shi Hao's body was so great that he did not even need to resort to any battle techniques when facing ordinary cultivators; all he had to do was to overwhelm them with the sheer amount of his zhenqi.

He was planning to do the same this time around too. His zhenqi gushed out as if water bursting out from a dam. Before such power, ordinary cultivators would find themselves completely bogged down by the intense concentration of zhenqi, leaving them incapable of retaliating or even escaping.

Art of Drawing Oceans: against the boundless mass of the ocean, it was impossible to withstand or avoid it!

"Not bad!" Feeling the other party's strength, Zhang Xuan's eyes lit up.

If he had not cultivated the Saint Ascension Decipher, the other party's zhenqi would probably have been on par with his.

To gain the same quantity of zhenqi as him, who had practiced the Heaven's Path Divine Art, through just an ordinary cultivation technique, the combat master named Shi Hao was indeed a formidable figure. It was no wonder he was able to break the existing record and claim first place for himself.

"Make your move!" While Zhang Xuan was still deep in thought. Shi Hao bellowed loudly as he raised his palm and struck at him.

It was not a particularly powerful battle technique, just the most basic Great Palm Strike.

But as simple as the technique was, the might it harnessed when complemented with Shi Hao's overwhelming zhenqi was frightening. It felt as if the technique would rip a hole even in space itself. The surrounding air currents raged under the furious strength of his Great Palm Strike, and the rumbling of thunder echoed in the surroundings.

The frightening amount of zhenqi formed a huge flood that threatened to crush everything in its path.

Without dodging, Zhang Xuan simply smiled lightly as he shot a finger forward.

Huala!

The ferocious wave stopped right before his fingertip, unable to advance a single inch forward. As if a snake grabbed seven inches from its head <sup>1</sup>, no matter how the wave raged, it found itself rendered completely helpless by the finger before it.

"Scram!"

Seeing how the other party had stopped his strongest attack with just a single finger, Shi Hao's face flushed red. With a furious roar, he drove his strength to its very maximum, to the point where his meridians were beginning to tear from the immense pressure from the zhenqi racing through them.

Noting the veins bulging from Shi Hao's head, Zhang Xuan shook his head. He bent his finger back slightly before flicking it forward forcefully.

Peng!

The massive wave vanished, and the rampaging zhenqi scattered into the surroundings. Deng deng deng deng! Shi Hao was forced to retreat eight steps, and his face turned scarlet from the impact.

Shi Hao swiftly took two breaths in order to calm his state, and to his astonishment, he realized that he had emerged from the short but deadly encounter with no injuries at all. In that instant, his face reddened in shame, and he quickly stepped forward and clasped his fist.

"Sun shi, thank you for going easy on me..."

He had attacked with his full strength; any ordinary cultivator would have suffered severe injuries in an instant. Yet, putting aside how the other party managed to subdue his attack with a single finger, he even controlled his strength so precisely that the damage he would suffer as a result of the collision of strength would be reduced to the bare minimum.

It was one thing to wield great power, but to be able to control it to such a precise extent as well... Terrifying!

"Your fighting prowess isn't too bad," Zhang Xuan complimented.

He did mean those words. In terms of quantity of zhenqi, the other party was just slightly beneath Wang Ying, Liu Yang, and his other direct disciples.

If he fought against the members of the Xuanxuan Faction, it was likely that the latter would not be a match for him.

It seemed like he would have to instruct those of the Xuanxuan Faction not to face this Combat Master Shi Hao in a direct clash of zhenqi, or else they would surely suffer tragic losses.

"Thank you!" Shi Hao thanked Zhang Xuan, but he couldn't completely conceal the bitterness on his face.

He was the individual who boasted the greatest amount of zhenqi among all Saint 1-dan cultivators ever since the founding of the Qingyuan Empire Combat Master Hall, but yet, in the other party's eyes, he could only qualify as 'not bad'!

However, the other party did have the right to say so.

Shi Hao hesitated for a moment before saying, "I was unwilling to believe it at first, but it seems like you have really cleared the Trial of Inner Breath with your own strength. If it's not too much, there's one question I would like to ask you!"

"Feel free to speak!"

"To destroy all ten of the stone walls in a single palm... May I know how much zhenqi you expended in that single blow?" Shi Hao asked.

Even after depleting the very last bit of his zhenqi, he had only managed to shatter three walls. The fact that the other party had destroyed everything within a single palm strike meant that he did not use his full strength in the first place. The truth might very well frighten him, but even so, he still wanted to know how much strength the other party used to shatter the ten stone walls. He would then use that as a gauge and aim to surpass the other party in the future.

The few combat masters who had remained in the area to spectate the fight also quickly turned their gazes over. They were intrigued by this matter as well.

When Shi Hao emerged from the passageway, his face had been ghastly pale, and he had looked as if he would fall at any moment. It had taken him several pills and a long

moment of recuperation before he had been able to heal up sufficiently to use the ultimate technique that he had just executed.

On the other hand, Sun shi had walked out of the passageway with a healthy red glow on his face, such that it almost seemed like he had just attended a feast instead of undergoing a trial. After that, he still had the strength to visit the library and browse through books. It would be understandable if he had not cleared the trial, but the problem was that he had done so with full marks! So, just how much zhenqi could he have?

"How much zhenqi did I expend?" Zhang Xuan did not really expect the other party to ask such a question. Scratching his head, he pondered for a moment before replying, "I wasn't pay much attention to it, but I should have recovered fully by the time I entered the library. Thank you for your concern."

Recovered fully by the time you entered the library? Thank you for my concern? Shi Hao choked on his saliva, and he nearly passed out on the spot.

Who the heck is worried about you? What I want to know is how powerful you are! But... you actually recovered by the time you entered the library?

Doesn't that mean that the amount of zhenqi you expended in the Trial of Inner Breath is insignificant to you?

This realization left Shi Hao's face paling, and he suddenly felt an excruciating ache in his heart.

For twenty years, he had held himself back from making a breakthrough, all for the sake of breaking a record and creating a legend for the future generations. He did manage to break the record, but it did not last for even two minutes before it was callously smashed by another person.

To make things worse, the other party did not even think that it was anything much!

He had thought that, at the very most, he would just have to work diligently for another twenty years to overcome the other party. However, judging from the current situation... even two hundred years would not be sufficient for him to reach the other party's level!

The gap between them was simply too huge, too huge!

In an instant, Shi Hao felt so traumatized that he seemed to be withering on the spot.

Only he himself knew how much suffering he had gone through over the past twenty years for the single goal of breaking the record. Many times, he had thought of giving up and just achieving a breakthrough on the spot, but upon thinking of that single goal he had, he had gritted his teeth and persevered. However, the goal that he had striven for all this time turned out to be nothing in the other party's eyes.

The more he thought about it, the more he felt like spewing blood.

Shi Hao gritted his teeth and asked once more, "Then... May I know how long Sun shi has been in Saint 1-dan to accumulate such astounding reserves of zhenqi?"

Even though the other party looked to be in his early twenties on the surface, there were several powerful clans who had secret arts that allowed them to conceal their age. Take him for example, he was already in his two hundreds this year, but in the eyes of others, he only appeared to be in his late thirties.

If the other party had spent more than twenty years at Saint 1-dan pinnacle, at the very least, he could console himself that the time he had spent was not in vain, and he could pick up some of his shattered fragments of confidence.

However, upon hearing Shi Hao's words, Zhang Xuan could not help but sigh deeply in lamentation. "It's a huge regret, but I have spent much longer than I thought I would in this realm!"

As he was unable to find the Saint 2-dan Heaven's Path Divine Art, he had ended up being stuck in Saint 1-dan for much longer than he would have liked. Just the thought of it left his face reddening in shame. This was like a dark stain on his record.

"You have spent much longer than you thought you would in this realm?" Shi Hao heaved a sigh of relief.

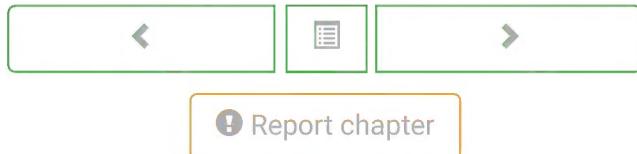
Given that the other party had also spent a long time in the realm in order to achieve such strength, it seemed like the talent he had did not pale too much in comparison to the other party after all.

"Indeed. I simply have not been able to find a suitable cultivation technique to achieve a breakthrough. That's also why I paid a visit to your library in hopes that I might find some inspiration for me to overcome my bottleneck!" Zhang Xuan sighed once more and shook his head regretfully. "After all, I have already been in this realm for more than a month. If I don't achieve a breakthrough soon, I won't have any face to stand before my students anymore."

"..." Shi Hao clutched his chest tightly.

"..." The other combat masters.

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